## REMARKS

Initially, Applicant notes that the remarks and amendments made by this paper are consistent with the proposals presented during the telephone call of April 25, 2007.

The Non-final Office Action, mailed March 13, 2007, considered and rejected claims 1-28. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-12, 15-20, 22, 23, and 26-28 were rejected as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application 2002/0086732 by Kirmse et al. hereinafter Kirmse. Claims 3, 5, 13, 14, 21, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kirmse. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

By this paper, claims 1-4, 7-11, 16, 18-21, and 23-26 have been amended and claims 5, 6, 14, 15, 22, 27, and 28 have been canceled, such that claims 1-4, 7-13, 16-21 and 23-26 remain pending. Of the pending claims, claims 1, 18, and 19 are the only independent claims at issue.[1]

Applicants' presently claimed invention is generally directed to embodiments for enabling a user to change game media and join an existing online game session of a friend that is selected from the user's friend list.

Claim 1, for example, recites a method for enabling a user to load a game and automatically join an online game session with a friend by logging the user on to an online gaming service; identifying an online game associated with the online gaming service to join that is currently being played by the friend and which is different than the online game currently loaded for play by the user. The information identifying the online game currently being played by the friend is stored in a local non-volatile storage. Using this information, the user is prompted to load the online game currently being played by the friend. The user's gaming session is then restarted with a newly loaded game (which may be the friend's game or another game). Finally, the user is automatically linked up with and joins the game being played by the friend without requiring any logon or password when it is determined that the online game being played by the friend is actually the same as the newly loaded game, by bypassing at least some of the login requirements, and based on a comparison of the stored friend game information and the

[1] Support for the amendments is found throughout the Specification as originally filed, including, but not limited to the disclosure found on pages 2 and 16-17. Support for the claims is also found in the claims as originally filed as many of the limitations were found in the dependent claims as originally filed.

newly loaded game, and if it is also determined that the current online game of the friend has an opening for the user to join and the online game of the friend has not yet concluded.

It will be noted that the current claims have been amended to address problems associated with a user joining a game session of a friend when that game is different from the game the user currently has loaded. In the past, when a user desired to join an online game that was different than the game a user was currently playing, the user was required to sign out and reboot their gaming console with the correct game. Then the user would need to log back on to the online gaming server and request to join the friend's game. The embodiments of the current invention make it easier and quicker for a user to do this. The user simply selects the game to join and starts the new game. The user's game system automatically signs the user into the gaming service and connects the user to the friend's game without requiring further input.

Applicant respectfully submits that the cited art of record fails to anticipate or otherwise make obvious Applicants' claimed invention, as recited, for example, in the amended claims. For example, Kirmse fails to disclose or suggest any embodiment for causing data identifying the online game currently being played by the friend and a game session currently being played by the friend to be stored in a local non-volatile storage; restarting the gaming session using a newly loaded game; and automatically comparing the online game being played by the friend as indicated by the data stored in the local non-volatile storage with the newly loaded online game, and as recited in combination with the other elements of claim 1.

Although Kirmse is generally directed to online gaming systems and for initiating games to be played with friends identified in a friends list, Kirmse fails to disclose or suggest any embodiment for switching games being played by a user that would include (1) causing data identifying the online game currently being played by the friend to be stored in a local non-volatile storage, (2) prompting the user to load the online game currently being played by the friend, (3) restarting the gaming session of the user with a newly loaded online game in response to user input; and (4) automatically comparing the online game being played by the friend, as indicated by the data stored in the local non-volatile storage, with the newly loaded online game, and automatically joining the online game being played by the friend by bypassing at least some login requirements (without requiring any logon or password) when it is determined (i) the newly loaded online game is actually the same as the online game currently being played by the friend,

(ii) the current online game being played by the friend has an opening for the user to join; and (iii) the online game of the friend has not yet concluded.

Although most of the foregoing remarks have been directed to Claim 1, it will be noted that the only other independent claims, (Claim 18 and 19) also incorporate the same limitations addressed above with regard to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 18 and 19 are patentably distinguishable over the cited art of record for at least those reasons stated above with regard to claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the other rejections to the claims are now moot and do not, therefore, need to be addressed individually at this time, including the rejections to the dependent claims. It will be appreciated, however, that this should not be construed as Applicants acquiescing to any of the purported teachings or assertions made in the last action regarding the cited art or the pending application, including any official notice.[2]

In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 13th day of June, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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[2] Instead, Applicants reserve the right to challenge any of the purported teachings or assertions made in the last action at any appropriate time in the future, should the need arise. Furthermore, to the extent that the Examiner has relied on any Official Notice, explicitly or implicitly, Applicant specifically requests that the Examiner provide references supporting the teachings officially noticed, as well as the required motivation or suggestion to combine the relied upon notice with the other art of record. Furthermore, although the prior art status of the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status of the cited art at any appropriate time, should it arise. Accordingly, any arguments and amendments made herein should not be construed as acquiescing to any prior art status of the cited art.